

## Auto Emergency Tool Kit by [AutoZone](#)

### How to put together simple tools that can be lifesavers in an emergency.

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**New** motorcycles usually come with a pretty decent set of basic tools with which you can handle almost any minor breakdown -- and even a few not-so-minor ones. But with cars, it's different... Only a few come with anything more than a jack and lug nut wrench to change a tire. Apparently, motorcyclists are deemed to be more self-sufficient; it's assumed they'll want to have the basics on hand in the event of a problem. With cars, this is not the case. But that doesn't mean you have to be helpless.

One way to avoid that is to put together a small tool kit of your own for those "just in case" times and keep it with the vehicle at all times.

#### **The kit should include the following:**

A socket-style screwdriver with driver and multiple "bits" in various Phillips and standard-style sizes: This tool is far more versatile than a regular screwdriver because you can pick the bit type and size that exactly fits the fastener you're trying to remove. Some kits come with a small selection of sockets and drivers for those Torx (star-shaped head) screws that are increasingly commonplace. It's an essential tool to have and keep with you in the car.

A roll of duct tape or electrical tape: Duct tape has been the emergency mechanic's best friend for years; with it, you can temporarily bind a leaking radiator hose or quickly patch up shattered glass. Electrical tape is great to have on hand when you need to keep an exposed electrical connection from touching something it shouldn't. Toss a roll of each into your tool kit.

A pair of medium-size vise-grip pliers: These can be used to remove things or hold them together in an emergency. Vise-grip pliers can temporarily hold up an exhaust system that's about to fall off. They're also great for working out bolts (or screws, etc.) that have been rounded off or stripped. They can be used in lieu of a bulky socket set because they'll fit almost any bolt and have the grip strength to remove most fasteners. Get two so you can use one to keep a locknut from turning with the bolt you're trying to remove.

Pen magnet: This handy tool can help you dig out keys that fell between the seats, or retrieve a tiny screw you dropped someplace inaccessible to your hand. Get the telescoping type that looks and functions just like a radio antenna. There are also flexible models that can be bent to work around obstacles. Both are great to have in certain circumstances where almost nothing else will do.

Pry bar: If you've ever been in a minor fender-bender where the fender rubs the tire, you'll know the value of a pry bar. It can turn an otherwise inoperable car into one you can get home, and save you some bucks on towing charges.

Mini-compressor: You can buy a small, handheld air compressor that runs off the car's cigarette lighter/power point for less than \$30. These compact, lightweight units can be a godsend if you find a tire is low on air and can't find a gas station with an air pump. They're also great for inflating kids' toys and air mattresses. Get one that has a built-in emergency flashlight. It will make you more visible to other drivers if you have to work on your car by the side of the road.

Emergency cell phone: Not all of us have cell phones, but everyone should have an emergency-use cell phone tucked away in the glove box. These phone are inexpensive (the plans call for a very limited number of calls per month or even just 911) but can be lifesavers if you have or witness a serious accident. You can also use them to report possible drunk drivers and other emergency situations.

Other stuff that's nice to have in the trunk when you're dealing with a breakdown includes a pair of gloves (the kind that allow your fingers to move freely), a hooded pullover (to keep your clothes and hair from being ruined if you have to lie on the ground), a heavy blanket (lie on it instead of the gravel/dirt) and, if your car doesn't have them already, some flares to draw the attention of drivers to the presence of your car on the shoulder.